

Cultural Socialization, Interdependent Self-Construal, and Ethnic Identity in Latinx and
Asian American Emerging Adults: A Mediation Analysis

by

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ABSTRACT

Research on cultural socialization, the process in which individuals learn messages regarding the traditions and values of their culture (Hughes et al., 2006), has dedicated little attention to Latinx and Asian American groups. This study examined whether an interdependent self-construal (i.e., viewing oneself as connected to others and endorsing behaviors that depend on others; Singelis, 1994) was a mediator between cultural socialization and ethnic identity for these two groups. The current study utilized mediation analyses to explore the associations between cultural socialization via different agents (i.e., parents, teachers, romantic partners, peers), interdependent self-construal, and ethnic identity exploration and commitment for Latinx ($N = 258$, 68.6% female, $M_{age} = 20.54$) and Asian ($N = 281$, 66.5% female, $M_{age} = 20.34$) American college-attending emerging adults. Results revealed that for the Latinx sample, interdependent self-construal mediated the relation between cultural socialization and ethnic identity exploration or commitment in regards to parents and peers, but not teachers. In addition, interdependent self-construal mediated the association between cultural socialization from romantic partners and ethnic identity commitment, but not exploration. For the Asian American sample, interdependent self-construal mediated the association between cultural socialization and ethnic identity exploration or commitment in regards to romantic partners and peers, but not parents and teachers. These results highlight the important role of different cultural socialization agents in ethnic identity formation for these two groups and suggest that the endorsement of cultural values can be a mechanism through which ethnic identity is strengthened.

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Introduction

As Latinx and Asian American populations represent the two fastest growing minority groups in the United States (U.S.; Pew Research Center, 2015), it is important to focus attention on relevant sociocultural processes related to their development. One important aspect related to their development is ethnic identity, which has been associated with well-being (French & Chavez, 2010; Fuligni, Witkow, & Garcia, 2005; Kiang et al., 2006; Mahalingam, Balan, & Haritatos, 2008; Romero & Roberts, 2003; Smith & Silva, 2011; Umaña-Taylor & Shin, 2007; Yip & Fuligni, 2002). Research has shown that Latinx and Asian Americans can develop their ethnic identity through culture-related messages that they receive from important people in their lives, such as parents, teachers, romantic partners, and peers (i.e., cultural socialization; Hughes et al., 2006; Priest et al., 2004). It is possible that the relationship between cultural socialization and ethnic identity in Latinx and Asian Americans can be better explained through interdependent self-construal (i.e., self-concept emphasizing relationships with others; Cross, Bacon & Morris, 2000; Singelis, 1994), which reflects the cultural value of interdependence for these two groups.

The current study draws on a sample of Latinx and Asian American emerging adults to understand the relations between cultural socialization, interdependent self-construal, and ethnic identity. Although extant literature often likens these two groups because of their collectivistic values (Raeff, Greenfield, & Quiroz, 2000; Yamaguchi, 1994), there are a number of differences between them (Chang, 2015; Oyserman, Coon, & Kimmelmeier, 2002), and it is essential to understand their distinct cultural socialization processes related to unique socialization agents. This study proposes a

mediation model in which cultural socialization from different individual socialization agents would predict interdependent self-construal, which then would predict ethnic identity exploration or commitment (Figure 1) for Latinx and Asian American emerging adults (18-25 years old; Arnett, 2000; Arnett, 2015). In the following sections, a review of the literature relevant to the present study is provided.

Ethnic Identity Formation: The Role of Cultural Socialization

Ethnic identity is a multidimensional construct that embodies the beliefs, attitudes, knowledge, and understanding of the values and implications of one's ethnic group membership (Knight, Bernal, Cota, Garza, & Ocampo, 1993; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014). Ethnic identity is important to study as it has been linked to the well-being of Latinx and Asian Americans (e.g., French & Chavez, 2010; Smith & Silva, 2011; Umaña-Taylor & Shin, 2007). Researchers posit that a stable ethnic identity consists of two components, exploration and commitment (Phinney & Ong, 2007). *Ethnic identity exploration* is defined as the proactive behaviors that are used to gain knowledge and experiences related to an individual's ethnic background. *Ethnic identity commitment* is the sense that individuals feel attachment, or a sense of belonging, to their ethnic group. A stable, secure ethnic identity includes the knowledge and understanding of membership that is based on a foundation of exploration processes. Furthermore, a secure ethnic identity includes personal investment, or commitment, to that ethnic identity. In examining the association between cultural socialization and a secure ethnic identity, it is crucial to capture both commitment and exploration when investigating the degree to which a comprehensive ethnic identity is formed (Phinney & Ong, 2007).

Cultural socialization is the process in which ethnic minority children learn about the values, traditions, and meanings connected to their culture through close significant others (Hughes & Chen, 1997; Hughes et al., 2006). To date, research on cultural socialization primarily has focused on the parental socialization of African American children's racial identity with less attention to other minority groups (e.g., Latinx and Asian Americans; Hughes et al., 2006; Priest et al., 2014). As such, more cultural socialization research is needed on Latinx and Asian Americans. In the limited research that exists, cultural socialization has been consistently found to relate to ethnic identity in Latinx and Asian Americans. For instance, a cross-sectional study found that cultural socialization was positively associated with ethnic identity for Asian American late adolescents (Tran & Lee, 2010). A longitudinal study focusing on Asian American adolescents found that cultural socialization was positively associated with ethnic identity one year later (Gartner, Kiang, & Supple, 2014). Further support for the relation between cultural socialization and ethnic identity exists in cross-sectional studies examining Latinx adolescents, which found that familial cultural socialization (i.e., culture-related messages received specifically from the family) was also positively associated with ethnic identity exploration (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014) and ethnic identity commitment (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2009; Umaña-Taylor & Fine, 2004). From these findings, it appears that cultural socialization likely predicts ethnic identity in both Latinx and Asian Americans; however, these studies examined only one source of cultural socialization (i.e., family; e.g., Lau, 2010; Cota & Garza, 1993).

The present study examines cultural socialization from parents, teachers, romantic partners, and peers. Most of the research on cultural socialization examines the role of

parental socialization on identity development (Hughes et al., 2006), but there is theoretical and empirical evidence that indicates the importance of studying other socialization agents who may contribute to this process as well. Bronfenbrenner's (1994) ecological theory states that an individual's development is influenced by many different contexts or layers (e.g., families or schools) and how they interact with one another. Research provides support for the ecological theory for Latinx (e.g., McMahon, Keys, Berardi, & Crouch, 2011; Umaña-Taylor and Fine, 2004) and Asian (e.g., Slaughter-Defoe et al., 1990) Americans. Although the family is the source of foundational education on ethnic identity (Knight et al., 1993; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014), cultural socialization can come from many different sources, or socialization agents, such as teachers, romantic partners, and peers (Aldana & Byrd, 2015; Douglass, Yip, & Shelton, 2014; Garcia-Coll & Pachter, 2002; Iwamoto et al., 2013; Sano, Kaida, & Tenkorang, 2015; Kawamoto, 2015; Kerpelman et al., 2012). For example, African American adolescent girls experienced increased ethnic identity after educators taught culturally relevant material in an afterschool program (Thomas, Davidson, & McAdoo, 2008). Despite empirical evidence supporting the importance of other cultural socialization agents, a systematic review conducted by Priest and colleagues (2014) found a dearth in studies examining socialization agents other than parents. Thus, it is important to consider cultural socialization in relation to how individual socialization agents (i.e., teachers, romantic partners, peers) uniquely contribute to ethnic identity formation in Latinx and Asian Americans.

Examining the relation between cultural socialization and ethnic identity may be particularly compelling during emerging adulthood. For both college-attending and non-

college-attending emerging adults, this timeframe represents an important period for deciding and forming beliefs and value systems (Arnett, 1997; Perry, 1999). This time period has been shown to be particularly relevant for diverse, ethnic minority samples to explore their ethnic identity (Syed & Azmitia, 2009; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014). In a cross-sectional study, family cultural socialization was found to be positively related to ethnic identity and psychological well-being in a large sample of Asian American college students (Nguyen, Wong, Juang, & Park, 2015). In addition, a longitudinal study on diverse college students found that ethnic identity exploration and commitment increased during college (Juang & Syed, 2010; Syed & Azmitia, 2009). For college students, emerging adulthood has been referred to as a “conscious-raising experience,” (p. 11) in which ethnic minorities are exposed to diverse peers and coursework that allow for the reconceptualization of ethnic identity (Azmitia, Syed, & Radmacher, 2008). Emerging adulthood represents a time that facilitates deeper, flexible reflection and allows ethnic minorities to create their own ethnic identity constructs (Azmitia et al., 2008; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014; Phinney & Alipuria, 1990; Phinney, 2006).

The present study will examine the association between cultural socialization, considering frequency of messages coming from individual socialization agents (i.e., parents, teachers, romantic partners, peers) and ethnic identity exploration and commitment in Latinx and Asian American college-attending emerging adults. Although extant literature provides strong support for the positive association between cultural socialization and ethnic identity; the potential mechanisms linking these two constructs remain unclear. Thus, the observation of the sociocultural variable, interdependent self-construal, may help explain ethnic identity specifically in Latinx and Asian Americans.

Mediating Role of Interdependent Self-Construal

Through cultural socialization, cultural values (i.e., perceived standards of behavior that denote how to be successful in a culture; Bilsky & Schwartz, 1994; Gudykunst et al., 1996), are imparted to help ethnic minorities understand their identities (Hughes & Chen, 1997). The endorsement of cultural values is an indicator of one's cultural orientation, or the extent to which one subscribes to his/her cultural identity (Neblett, Rivas-Drake, & Umaña-Taylor, 2012). A longitudinal study examining college students found that internalization of values are significant predictors of personal identity (Hitlin, 2003). In addition, research has found evidence that the internalization of cultural values predicts ethnic identity for African Americans (Cokley, 2005), Asian Americans (Iwamoto & Liu, 2010; Wan et al., 2007), and Mexican Americans (Knight et al., 2011). From these findings, we deduce that culturally socialized values are internalized, which may help Latinx and Asian Americans develop their ethnic identity.

Cultural socialization for Latinx and Asian Americans may impart unique sociocultural values pertaining to these two groups' cultures, which are traditionally conceptualized as more collectivistic (i.e., cultural emphasis on communal or societal goals; Gudykunst et al., 1996) than individualistic (i.e., cultural emphasis on individual goals; Heinrichs et al., 2006; Lucas, Diener, Grob, Suh, & Shao, 2000). Individuals from collectivistic cultures are socialized with a conceptualization of the self, *interdependent self-construal* (Gudykunst et al., 1996), in which self-understanding is dependent upon the thoughts, feelings, and actions of others (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). An interdependent self-construal may reflect an internalized cultural value system for these two groups, as it is imparted through cultural socialization and results in the expression of

behaviors that align with a collectivistic cultural identity (Gudykunst et al., 1996). For both Latinx and Asian Americans, an interdependent self-construal has been found to be related to behaviors that promote in-group goals (Fuligni, Tseng, & Lam, 1999; Knight, Carlo, Mahrer, & Davis, 2016; Schwartz et al., 2010; Yasui & Dishion, 2007) that reflect their collectivistic cultural orientation. When members of these groups engage in behaviors that promote in-group goals, they may feel a stronger connection to their in-groups, thus enhancing their ethnic identities. Thus, when examining ethnic identity formation, it is important to understand the relationship between cultural socialization and interdependent self-construal.

Although research examining cultural socialization and interdependent self-construal is limited, there is empirical support that cultural socialization imparts collectivism-related values that are consistent with an interdependent self-construal. For instance, based on their families' collectivistic teachings, Latinx and Asian American high schoolers were found to value familism, or the duty to assist, support, and respect their families (Fuligni, Tseng, & Lam, 1999). Familism is a construct that has been shown to be closely, positively correlated with collectivism (Schwartz et al., 2010). Furthermore, Mexican Americans socialized with culturally based values were found to have higher rates of familism (Knight, Carlo, Mahrer, & Davis, 2016). In a study comparing Chinese and European American mothers, Chinese mothers were more likely to impart messages to obey their parents (i.e., filial piety) to their children than European American mothers (Chao, 2000). Similarly, in a cross-national study, Chinese participants were socialized with more collectivistic goals than European Americans (Li, Costanzo, & Putallaz, 2010). Based upon these findings, it is plausible that socialization

within Latinx and Asian American communities may reinforce collectivistic cultural values, which may strengthen ethnic identity exploration and commitment for members of both two groups.

Present Study

The present study aims to advance the current literature on the mechanisms supporting ethnic identity formation for both Latinx and Asian American emerging adult college students. Specifically, this study will utilize a mediation model to explore how cultural socialization from different socialization agents and interdependent self-construal relate to these two groups' ethnic identity exploration and commitment. The current study hypothesizes that the mechanism linking cultural socialization and ethnic identity for Latinx and Asian Americans is interdependent self-construal. This study addresses the research question, “Are the associations between cultural socialization from individual agents and ethnic identity exploration or commitment mediated by interdependent self-construal for Latinx and Asian American emerging adults?”

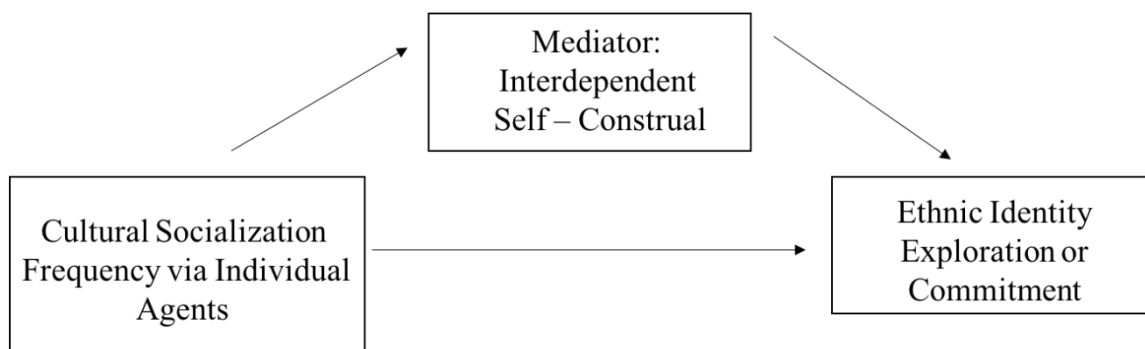


Figure 1. Mediation model

Methods

Participants

Self-identified college students ($N = 5,156$) were recruited from April 2014 to May 2016 to take an online Qualtrics survey that was approved by the Arizona State University Institutional Review Board. The samples of Latinx ($n = 1,120$) and Asian ($n = 642$) Americans used for analyses were drawn from the larger sample of college students nationwide. General recruitment methods included advertising through social media (e.g., Facebook, Reddit, Craigslist, Imgur, Twitter), paper flyers, word of mouth, emailing university registrars, and student organizations. Targeted recruitment for Latinx and Asian American students included advertising to Latinx and Asian American student organizations at universities nationwide, emailing Chicano/a and Asian Pacific Islander studies professors from universities in the United States, and Facebook advertisements. In addition to entering a raffle to win an Amazon gift card, the survey offered extra credit for participating courses.

Participants were provided with an electronic consent form at the beginning of the survey. Five validation questions (e.g., “Select ‘moderately disagree’ for this item.”) were integrated throughout the survey to identify and remove participants who were carelessly responding (Meade & Craig, 2012). A total of 799 Latinx Americans and 361 Asian Americans were excluded from analyses for failing to answer all five validation items correctly. In addition, only participants who reported ages of 18-25 were included in this study to correspond to a prevailing definition of emerging adults (Arnett, 2000; Arnett, 2007).

The final sample utilized for the present analysis consisted of 258 Latinx ($M_{\text{age}} = 20.54$, $SD_{\text{age}} = 2.02$) and 281 Asian American emerging adults ($M_{\text{age}} = 20.34$, $SD_{\text{age}} = 1.90$). The Latinx American sample was composed of Mexican Americans ($n = 171$) and other Latinx ethnicities (e.g., Venezuelan, Columbian, Peruvian); $n = 87$); and the Asian American sample was composed of Chinese ($n = 81$), Vietnamese ($n = 41$), Filipino ($n = 33$), Korean ($n = 31$), Indian ($n = 30$), and other Asian ethnicities (e.g., Japanese, Taiwanese, Cambodian); $n = 65$). In the current study, 68.6% ($n = 177$) and 66.5% ($n = 187$) of the Latinx and Asian American sample, respectively, reported being female. The majority of the Latinx [87.6% ($n = 226$)] and Asian American [94.3% ($n = 265$)] participants reported English as their primary language, as well as U.S. born status [77.9% ($n = 219$) and 89.1% ($n = 230$) of the Latinx and Asian American samples, respectively].

Measures

Ethnic identity. The Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure-Revised (MEIM-R; Phinney & Ong, 2007) is a 6-item, psychometrically validated instrument used to assess ethnic identity across diverse minority groups (Yoon, 2011). The MEIM-R is composed of two subscales, ethnic exploration (e.g., active behaviors in seeking information and experiences that relate to the one's ethnic identity) and ethnic commitment (e.g., individual's sense of belonging or attachment to their ethnic identity). A sample item for ethnic exploration reads, "I have often talked to other people in order to learn more about my ethnic group" and for ethnic commitment, "I have a strong sense of belonging to my own ethnic group". Items were rated on a 4-point Likert-type scale (e.g., 1 = *strongly disagree* to 4 = *strongly agree*). A previous study showed that the MEIM-R to have

strong internal reliability scores for both Mexican ($\alpha = .90$) and Asian Americans ($\alpha = .84$; Yoon, Jung, & Lee, 2012). In the current sample, internal reliability was .89 and .86 for ethnic exploration and .85 and .90 for ethnic commitment in Latinx and Asian American samples, respectively.

Cultural socialization. Cultural socialization was measured from four different socializing agents (i.e., parents, peers, teachers, and romantic partners) with the 4-point Likert-type (e.g., 0 = *nothing or almost nothing* to 3 = *a lot*) item, “How much have you learned about your racial/ethnic culture, heritage, or identity from each of the following individuals?”

Interdependent self-construal. Interdependent self-construal was measured using the 12-item Interdependent Self-Construal subscale of the Self-Construal Scale, a gauge of the composition of thoughts, feelings, and actions that denote an interdependent self-construal (Singelis, 1994). Singelis (1994) argued that interdependence and independence are orthogonal and should be considered separately. In the current study, only interdependence will be analyzed as the previous section (i.e., Mediating Role of Interdependent Self-Construal) provided theoretical evidence for the collectivistic conceptualization of both Latinx and Asian American groups. A sample item reads, “It is important for me to maintain harmony within my group.” Respondents rated items on a 7-point Likert-type scale (e.g., 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*). In the current study, internal reliability was .71 and .67 for Latinx and Asian American samples, respectively. These internal reliability estimates are consistent with those of other studies on Latinx and Asian Americans (see Lee, Suchday, & Wylie-Rosett, 2015; de Mamani et al., 2007).

Preliminary Analyses

Independent *t*-tests were conducted to examine the mean differences between Latinx and Asian American race/ethnicity in relation to key study variables. Effect sizes were calculated and interpreted according to Cohen's (1988) conventions for effect size, which suggest that a *d*-value around 0.2 is small, 0.5 is medium, and 0.8 is large.

Additionally, a multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to examine the relative predictive strength of cultural socialization from each socialization agent in relation to ethnic identity exploration or commitment for both Latinx and Asian American samples.

The squared semipartial correlation coefficient estimates (sr^2) indexed the unique contribution to the variance of ethnic identity exploration or commitment accounted for by cultural socialization from each socialization agent, while controlling for cultural socialization from all other socialization agents. The squared semipartial correlation coefficients were examined according to the proportion of variance guidelines set by Cohen (1962, 1988), which state that an sr^2 of 0.01 is small, 0.09 is medium, and 0.25 is large.

Analytic Plan

Utilizing the SPSS macro, PROCESS 2.16 (Hayes, 2016), mediation analyses were conducted to examine the indirect effects of Latinx and Asian American samples separately. Mediation analyses examined whether cultural socialization from individual socialization agents (i.e., parents, teachers, romantic partners, and peers; *X* variable) predicted an interdependent self-construal (*Mediator*; path a), which, in turn, would predict ethnic identity exploration or commitment (*Y* variable; path b). Mediation analyses with bootstrapping at 10,000 resamples provided bias-corrected 95% confidence

intervals and estimates of the indirect effects. Significant indirect effects are indicated by a 95% confidence interval that does not overlap with zero, which denotes that the association is significantly different than zero (Hayes, 2015), and therefore, mediation is present.

Results

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

A series of independent *t*-tests (see Table 1 for correlations, scale descriptives, means, and standard deviations for key study variables) were conducted to examine the mean differences between Latinx and Asian American race/ethnicity in relation to (a) cultural socialization from each socialization agent, (b) interdependent self-construal, (c) ethnic identity exploration, and (d) ethnic identity commitment. In this study, cultural socialization from romantic partners approached a medium effect size, while cultural socialization via all other socialization agents, interdependent self-construal, and ethnic identity exploration and commitment were estimated to have small effect sizes. Latinx Americans appeared to receive greater frequencies of cultural socialization from teachers ($d = 0.24$), romantic partners ($d = 0.44$), and peers ($d = 0.24$) than Asian Americans. These two groups did not differ in cultural socialization frequency from parents ($d = 0.04$). There were significant differences between Latinx and Asian Americans' ethnic identity commitment ($d = 0.22$), with Latinx Americans reporting stronger sense of attachment and belonging to their ethnic identity than Asian Americans, but no significant differences between the groups' average interdependent self-construal ($d = 0.05$) and ethnic identity exploration ($d = 0.05$). Altogether the key study variables (i.e., cultural socialization via individual socialization agents, interdependent self-construal,

ethnic identity exploration, and ethnic identity commitment) did not differ based on major demographic variables (i.e., U.S. born status, English as primary language spoken, and gender) in both Latinx and Asian American samples.

For both groups, cultural socialization from parents, teachers, romantic partners, and peers each were positively correlated with ethnic identity exploration and commitment at $p < .01$. For Latinx, cultural socialization from parents, romantic partners, and peers was positively associated with interdependent self-construal at $p < .01$, while for Asian Americans, only cultural socialization from peer and romantic partners was positively associated with interdependent self-construal at $p < .01$.

A multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to examine the relative predictive strength of cultural socialization from each socialization agent in relation to ethnic identity exploration or commitment for both Latinx and Asian American samples (standardized coefficient and squared semipartial correlation coefficients reported in Table 2). Based upon proportion of variance guidelines, cultural socialization via parents explained a medium proportion of ethnic identity exploration and commitment variability, while cultural socialization via teachers, romantic partners, and peers explained small proportions in the Latinx sample. For the Asian American sample, cultural socialization via peers explained a medium proportion of ethnic identity exploration variance, while cultural socialization from parents, teachers, and romantic partners explained small proportions. In terms of ethnic identity commitment variance, cultural socialization via all socialization agents uniquely explained small proportions in the Asian American sample.

Mediation Analyses

Table 3 provides the findings for each model examining whether interdependent self-construal mediated the association between cultural socialization from individual socialization agents and ethnic identity exploration or commitment for Latinx and Asian Americans.¹ Cultural socialization from parents, romantic partners, and peers was significantly and positively related to interdependent self-construal for the Latinx sample (path a), while cultural socialization from teachers was not. Interdependent self-construal was significantly positively related to ethnic identity exploration (path b) when examined with cultural socialization from parents and teachers and significantly predicted ethnic identity commitment (path b) when examined with all individual socialization agents. For the Asian American sample, only cultural socialization from romantic partners and peers were significantly positively related to interdependent self-construal, while cultural socialization from parents and teachers were not (path a). Interdependent self-construal significantly predicted ethnic identity exploration and commitment when examined with all individual socialization agents (path b). Mediation analyses revealed that for Asian Americans, indirect effects were significant for romantic partners and peers, but not parents and teachers in relation to both ethnic identity exploration and commitment. For Latinx, indirect effects were found for parents and peers in relation to both ethnic identity exploration and commitment.² Significant indirect effects were found for romantic partners in relation to ethnic identity commitment, but not ethnic identity exploration for the Latinx sample.

Discussion

The present study appears to be the first to examine the role of cultural socialization from parents, teachers, romantic partners, and peers in relation to interdependent self-construal and ethnic identity formation in large samples of Latinx and Asian American emerging adults. The results of this study provide a unique and valuable perspective into the significant roles that different socialization agents play in ethnic identity development for these two groups. A key finding of this study was that cultural socialization via all agents significantly consistently predicted ethnic identity exploration and commitment across racial/ethnic groups. Furthermore, a pattern of significant indirect effects was found with respect to specific socialization agents across these racial/ethnic groups. For Latinx Americans, mediation effects were found in relation to cultural socialization via parents, peers, and romantic partners; while for Asian Americans, mediation effects were found for cultural socialization via romantic partners and peers. There were no mediation effects found in respect to cultural socialization via teachers for both samples. Results have important implications in understanding the mechanisms behind ethnic identity formation for Latinx and Asian American emerging adults.

Examination of the specific paths of the mediation model may provide an explanation for the unique patterns of significant mediation for Latinx and Asian American emerging adults. It was notable that the pattern of significant associations between cultural socialization from different socialization agents and interdependent self-construal (path a) mirrored the significant indirect effects for each respective racial/ethnic group. For Latinx Americans, cultural socialization messages via parents, romantic partners, and peers significantly predicted an interdependent self-construal, whereas

cultural socialization via teachers did not. For Asian Americans, cultural socialization messages via romantic partners and peers significantly predicted an interdependent self-construal, while cultural socialization via parents and teachers did not. These results suggest that cultural socialization did not universally predict the internalization of interdependent cultural values, but may vary by cultural socialization source.

Parental cultural socialization may have predicted interdependent self-construal for Latinx, but not Asian Americans due to cultural differences between parents and their children. Intergenerational conflict from cultural differences has been found to persist in Asian American families well into emerging adulthood (Lee et al., 2000; Lee & Liu, 2001). Although intergenerational conflicts also exist in Latinx families (Dennis, Basañez, & Farahmand, 2010), Asian American students have been found to be significantly more likely to report family conflict than Latinx (Lee & Liu, 2001). Perhaps parental cultural socialization predicted an interdependent self-construal for Latinx, but not Asian Americans because intergenerational conflict might impact these groups' family dynamics differently. While intergenerational conflict may exist for both of these racial/ethnic groups, this conflict could be more disruptive to Asian American cultural socialization processes. Due to relational conflicts within the family, Asian Americans may be less likely to accept and internalize cultural socialization from their parents, which may explain why parental cultural socialization from parents did not predict an interdependent self-construal for the present study's Asian American sample. Further research on intergenerational conflict and acculturation gaps may provide richer information regarding the salience of cultural socialization from parents.

In contrast to the mixed findings of indirect effects for parental cultural socialization across racial/ethnic groups, it was interesting to find relatively consistent indirect effects in the cases of cultural socialization from romantic partners and peers across groups. Emerging adults tend to have stronger attachment to their romantic partners and weaker attachment to their parents (Arnett, 2007; Feeney, 2004). Furthermore, romantic partners and peers are utilized more as a safe haven for emerging adults (i.e., an attachment figure who provides security) than parents. Romantic partnerships and friendships are characterized as two individuals seeking mutual fulfillment (Laursen & Williams, 1997). In these voluntary relationships, interdependence is a primary concern because one party is free to dissolve the relationship if it is inequitable. Perhaps because of the communal nature of these relationships, peers and romantic partners are socializing interdependent values for the mutual benefit of both parties that are particularly meaningful during emerging adulthood (e.g., Li & Cheng, 2015). Although there is a dearth in research examining the role of romantic partners and peers in relation to ethnic identity development during emerging adulthood, the results from the present study, as well as other scholarship (e.g., Nelson, Syed, Tran, Hu, & Lee, under review; Priest et al., 2014) provide support that these individuals have a pivotal role in socialization, especially in relation to Latinx and Asian American emerging adults. Although the current study did not have information regarding the racial/ethnic identity of the participants' romantic partners and peers, it may be worthwhile to examine this for future research. Perhaps individuals that have intra-racial/-ethnic romantic partners and peers would be more likely to be socialized with cultural values reflected by an

interdependent self-construal than those in interracial romantic partnerships and friendships.

It was interesting to note that cultural socialization from teachers was significantly associated with ethnic exploration and commitment in the direct effects regression results (path c'), but there was no evidence of mediation through interdependent self-construal. The direct effect results suggest that there is a potential for teachers to play a pivotal role in ethnic identity formation, and perhaps cultural education is the key to strengthening teachers' role in Latinx and Asian American emerging adult groups. Yamauchi (1998) writes that for teachers to be most effective with all students, they must tend to the differences that may exist for students from collectivistic cultures, such as utilizing education techniques that promote collaboration and team building. However the indirect effect results may suggest there is another mediating variable operating instead of interdependent self-construal. For both Latinx and Asian American samples, cultural socialization via teachers did not predict an interdependent self-construal (path a), which may explain the pattern of consistent nonsignificant mediation effects in relation to teacher cultural socialization. A possible explanation may be because American teachers impart more independent values (e.g., competition, individual success, personal freedom) rather than interdependent values (e.g., thinking about others when making decisions; Coleman, 1995; Sue & Sue, 1990). A study comparing imparted values by Latinx parents and elementary school teachers found that Latinx parents were more likely to promote familism-based values than teachers (Greenfield & Quiroz, 2013). As such, values imparted by teachers may be more individualistic and therefore would not promote an interdependent self-construal for Latinx and Asian American emerging

adults. Perhaps instead of interdependent self-construal, power distance could be considered as a mediator in the relation between teacher cultural socialization and ethnic identity in future research examining these racial/ethnic groups. According to Hofstede (1980), many Latin and Asian countries support high power distance (i.e., strong authority centrality). It may be possible that teacher cultural socialization would predict high power distance, which would in turn, predict a strong ethnic identity for these two racial/ethnic groups.

Despite the mixed findings for path a, there was a relatively consistent link between interdependent self-construal and ethnic identity. Interdependent self-construal significantly predicted ethnic identity commitment (path b) across all socialization agent models in both Latinx and Asian American samples. For both samples, interdependent self-construal also predicted ethnic identity exploration (path b) for all models examining the different socialization agents, except in the case of romantic partners and peers for the Latinx American sample. This overall trend is consistent with the extant literature, supporting the notion that both of these groups internalize collectivistic-based cultural values, which reinforces ethnic identification (Gudykunst et al., 1996; Neblett, Rivas-Drake, & Umaña-Taylor, 2012). These results coupled with the numerous findings of indirect effects provide evidence that interdependent self-construal is an important construct to study when examining ethnic identity formation for these racial/ethnic groups.

Implications

Results from the current study may have practical implications for counseling. Given the importance of ethnic identity in minority populations, mental health

professionals can use the findings from this study to assess for frequency of cultural socialization from different agents in the client's life. For example, knowing that peers play an important role in ethnic identity exploration and commitment for both Latinx and Asian Americans, counselors can assess the frequency of cultural socialization messages that a client receives from his/her friends. In the case of a client who is lacking cultural socialization from his/her peers, the mental health professional can then provide the client with resources to gather more cultural socialization messages (e.g., student organizations) from peers that may strengthen their ethnic identity formation.

Furthermore, assessing for the content of these messages and understanding whether they promote an interdependent self-construal may be important to the ethnic identity development of these two groups. Indeed, research has found that understanding values has helped with identity formation in clients (Waterman, 1984). In an empirical review, Carter (1991) found that clients' cultural values may impact mental health processes. Culturally-centered interventions based upon knowledge of cultural values have been found to be effective with Latinx clients in counseling (Bernal & Sáez-Santiago, 2006). Thus, results from this study provides unique information regarding Latinx and Asian American cultural values and ethnic identity formation processes promoted by specific individuals that may have a particular relevance to these clients' experience of counseling.

In addition, efforts to support Latinx and Asian American ethnic identity development can be implemented through targeted interventions incorporating different socialization agents (i.e., parents, teachers, romantic partners, and peers). From the results of this study, specific socialization agents presumably imparted values supporting an

interdependent self-construal for these racial/ethnic groups. Research supports that both parents and peer groups have a large effect on student-endorsed values (Astill, Feather, & Keeves, 2002), which suggests that interventions (e.g., talking about cultural values) involving socialization agents may be particularly advantageous to support ethnic identity development in these two groups. Based on this study, parents, romantic partners, and peers are significant predictors of interdependent self-construal and ethnic identity exploration and commitment for Latinx whereas for Asian Americans, significant predictors were romantic partners and peers. Thus, interventions may consider these specific socialization agents to support Latinx and Asian American ethnic identity development.

Limitations and Future Directions

There are limitations to this study that must be recognized in the interpretation of this study's findings. This study utilized cross-sectional data from which causation cannot be inferred. This means that the direction of the paths (i.e., cultural socialization predicts interdependent self-construal, which predicts ethnic identity exploration and commitment) cannot be proven. Future studies may implement a longitudinal design to examine whether the mediation effect holds.

In addition, this study utilized single items to assess for cultural socialization across various agents. This item assessed for the frequency of cultural messages, but did not have the ability to assess for the content of these messages. For example, if a socialization agent taught a Latinx or Asian American individual solely messages regarding cultural history, but not values, the probability of that individual adopting an interdependent self-construal may be less likely. A possible future research design may

also factor in acculturation status to understand how culture is socialized via individual agents; research has suggested that acculturation status impacts cultural socialization practices (e.g., Patel & Power, 1996; Sabogal, Marín, Otero-Sabogal, Marín, & Perez-Stable, 1987).

Another limitation of the current study is the examination of a sample restricted to college students that may not be representative of the larger population of Latinx and Asian American emerging adults. According to the United States Department of Labor (2014), the median weekly earnings for full-time Asian and Latinx Americans with bachelor's degrees was at least one hundred dollars more than high school graduates without a college degree. By focusing on college students, this study may have been examining a population of Latinx and Asian Americans who have prospects of higher socioeconomic statuses, which may not be representative of the experiences of Latinx and Asian American emerging adults as a whole. Thus, the results of the current study may not be generalizable to the larger population of Latinx and Asian American emerging adults.

Lastly, there may be differences that exist across Latinx or Asian American racial/ethnic subgroups. Although all participants included in this study stated that they were either Asian or Latinx American, there are varying amounts of independence and interdependence within each culture (Singelis, 1994). Indeed, Oyserman and colleagues (2002) found in a meta-analytic review that differences exist in levels of collectivism across Asian and Latin American countries. Even among Asian ethnic subgroups, there are differences among cultural orientation and development (Hall, Okazaki, Yeh, & Chang, 2004). Similarly, heterogeneity exists for Latinx ethnic subgroups in relation to

family composition (Landale, Oropesa, & Bradatan, 2006). Future work can expand upon the current findings by utilizing larger, nationally representative Latinx and Asian American ethnic subsamples to prevent overgeneralization.

Conclusion

This study provides initial evidence that cultural socialization from specific agents may predict interdependent self-construal, which, in turn, predicts ethnic identity for Asian and Latinx American emerging adults. As one of the first studies to examine the relation of different cultural socialization agents and ethnic identity formation through interdependent self-construal, findings broaden the current conceptualization of prominent cultural socialization sources and potential mechanisms that link cultural socialization to ethnic identity among Latinx and Asian American emerging adults.

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Footnotes

¹Moderated mediation analyses utilizing Andrew Hayes' PROCESS 2.16 were conducted to examine whether differences existed in the proposed mediation model between Asian and Latinx American samples. With the exception of cultural socialization from peers in relation to ethnic identity commitment, there was an absence of moderation effects.

²When examining only the Mexican American subsample of the present study, significant indirect effects between cultural socialization and ethnic identity exploration or commitment were only found in relation to peers.

APPENDIX A

TABLES

Table 1

Correlations, Effect Sizes, and Scale Descriptive Statistics

Variables	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>d</i>
1. PaCS	-	.10	.23**	.25**	.09	.37**	.40**	2.26/2.23	.89/.82	.04
2. TCS	.17**	-	.31**	.33**	.11	.36**	.29**	1.33/1.10 ^a	.96/.95	.24***
3. RPCS	.28**	.14*	-	.42**	.16**	.24**	.24**	1.42/.97 ^a	1.06/.97	.44***
4. PeCS	.36**	.21**	.49**	-	.15*	.47**	.40**	1.50/1.32 ^a	.85/.97	.20*
5. ISC	.17**	.10	.31**	.28**	-	.22**	.21**	5.02/5.16	.87/.74	.05
6. Exp	.57**	.26**	.35**	.42**	.22**	-	.71**	2.86/2.90	.79/.78	.05
7. Com	.57**	.19**	.36**	.41**	.31**	.71**	-	3.06/2.88 ^a	.81/.77	.22**

Note. This table presents the bivariate correlations for the Latinx (below the diagonal) and Asian American (above the diagonal) samples. Descriptive statistics are presented as Latinx/Asian Americans. PaCS = Parental cultural socialization; TCS = Teacher cultural socialization; RPCS = Romantic partner cultural socialization; PeCS = Peer cultural socialization; ISC = Interdependent self-construal; Exp = Ethnic identity exploration; Com = Ethnic identity commitment; ^a = significant mean differences.

*** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$.

Table 2
*Standardized Coefficients for Individual
 Socialization Agents*

	<u>Exp</u>		<u>Com</u>	
	β	sr^2	β	sr^2
Latx Am				
PaCS	.46***	.18	.47***	.19
TCS	.14*	.02	.08	.01
RPCS	.13*	.01	.13*	.01
PeCS	.14*	.01	.17*	.02
AsAm				
PaCS	.21**	.04	.26***	.06
TCS	.23**	.04	.21**	.04
RPCS	-.03	.00	.00	.00
PeCS	.21**	.09	.26**	.05

Note. Exp = Ethnic identity exploration; Com = Ethnic identity commitment

*** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$.

Table 3

Mediation Statistics for Latinx and Asian Americans

	Latinx				Asian Americans			
	Exp		Com		Exp		Com	
	<i>B</i> (<i>SE</i>)	95% CI	<i>B</i> (<i>SE</i>)	95% CI	<i>B</i> (<i>SE</i>)	95% CI	<i>B</i> (<i>SE</i>)	95% CI
Parents		[.00, .05] ^a		[.01, .07] ^a		[-.00, .05]		[-.00, .04]
<i>a</i> path	.16(.06)*	-	.16(.06)*	-	.07(.05)	-	.07(.05)	-
<i>b</i> path	.13(.05)*	-	.22(.06)***	-	.23(.07)***	-	.20(.06)*	-
<i>c</i> ' path	.48(.05)***	-	.48(.05)***	-	.33(.05)***	-	.36(.05)***	-
<i>c</i> path	.02(.01)	-	.03(.01) ^a	-	.02(.01)	-	.02(.01)	-
Teachers		[-.00, .05]		[-.00, .06]		[-.00, .04]		[-.00, .04]
<i>a</i> path	.09(.05)	-	.09(.05)	-	.07(.04)	-	.07(.04)	-
<i>b</i> path	.19(.06)*	-	.30(.06)***	-	.22(.07)*	-	.21(.06)*	-
<i>c</i> ' path	.20(.05)***	-	.14(.05)**	-	.27(.05)***	-	.22(.05)***	-
<i>c</i> path	.02(.01)	-	.03(.02)	-	.02(.01)	-	.02(.01)	-
Romantic partners		[-.00, .06]		[.02, .10] ^a		[.00, .06] ^a		[.00, .06] ^a
<i>a</i> path	.24(.05)***	-	.24(.05)***	-	.10(.05)*	-	.10(.05)*	-
<i>b</i> path	.10(.07)	-	.23(.07)***	-	.20(.10)*	-	.24(.08)*	-
<i>c</i> ' path	.24(.05)***	-	.22(.05)***	-	.17(.06)**	-	.17(.07)*	-
<i>c</i> path	.02(.02)	-	.06(.02) ^a	-	.02(.01)	-	.02(.01) ^a	-
Peers		[.00, .07] ^a		[.03, .10] ^a		[.00, .05] ^a		[.00, .05] ^a
<i>a</i> path	.27(.05)***	-	.27(.05)***	-	.10(.04)*	-	.10(.04)*	-
<i>b</i> path	.11(.06)	-	.21(.06)***	-	.18(.06)***	-	.18(.07)*	-
<i>c</i> ' path	.35(.05)***	-	.34(.06)***	-	.36(.04)***	-	.30(.05)***	-
<i>c</i> path	.03(.02) ^a	-	.06(.02) ^a	-	.02(.01)	-	.02(.01) ^a	-

Note: Exp = Ethnic identity exploration; Com = Ethnic identity commitment ; All models are bootstrapped at 10,000, ^a = Bias-corrected 95% confidence interval does not overlap with zero.

*** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$.